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Updated 2012 National Wetland Plant List is available

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in partnership with other federal agencies announced today the release of the updated National Wetland Plant List (NWPL). This national list of wetland plants by species and their wetland ratings provides general botanical information about wetland plants and is used extensively by federal and state agencies, the scientific and academic communities, and the private sector in wetland delineations and the planning and monitoring of wetland mitigation and restoration sites. The list is available at http://wetland_plants.usace.army.mil

In the early 1980s, the four primary federal agencies with responsibilities for wetlands - USACE, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service – realized the importance of utilizing plants and soils as indicators for wetland delineation purposes. The agencies agreed to assemble panels of wetland ecologists and botanists to review and revise a national wetland plant list for the U.S. and U.S. territories. The NWPL released today will replace the FWS 1988 National List of Plant Species that Occur in Wetlands.

“This is an example of how this Administration is using new science and a transparent process for regulatory activities. I am pleased that the agencies were able to work closely together to get this new, more accurate plant list completed,” said the Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

Administration of the NWPL was transferred from FWS to USACE in 2006. USACE launched a Web-based interagency scientific process and created a Web site to update the 1988 plant list. Scientific names and ratings for 8,200 wetland plants were updated through the Web site, which also provided for academic and independent peer reviews of the process, resulting in completion of the list announced today.

The 2012 NWPL will be used in any wetland delineations or determinations performed after June 1, 2012. The 2012 NWPL may be used in delineation/determination forms prior to that date, and should be referenced on any data forms used in the wetland delineation/determination if used.

The NWPL announcement is published in the May 9, 2012, Federal Register and is available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-05-09/pdf/2012-11176.pdf>.

For more information on the USACE Regulatory Program, please visit:
<http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/RegulatoryProgramandPermits.aspx>.

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